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7 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**
8 **WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON**
9 **AT SEATTLE**

10 STATE OF WASHINGTON, et al.,

11 v.
12 Plaintiffs,

13 DONALD J. TRUMP, in his official
14 capacity as President of the United States of
15 America, et al.,

16 Defendants.

17 NO.

18 DECLARATION OF ELIHU
19 HILLINGER

1 I, Elihu Hillinger, declare as follows:

2 1. I am 16 years old, competent to testify as to the matters herein, have my parents' 3 permission to make this declaration, and make this declaration based on my personal knowledge.

4 2. My name is Elihu Hillinger and I am a transgender male. I live with my parents 5 in Washington state. I really like my Civics and English classes at school, and I am a volunteer 6 camp counselor at a wilderness program, where I teach kids survival skills and about the natural 7 world. I have even been invited to be a paid counselor with the program this summer, which is 8 rare and requires extra administrative steps for teens. I also love hiking and helping my school 9 community.

10 3. I am writing this declaration because I was supposed to have gender-affirming 11 top surgery at Seattle Children's Hospital this week, but my appointment was "indefinitely 12 postponed" less than 24 hours before the surgery. I am aware of the Executive Order (EO) from 13 President Trump that limits gender-affirming care and I was worried the EO might have an effect 14 on my surgery. I had asked the hospital several times leading up to the appointment if there was 15 a chance of my surgery being canceled, and they repeatedly reassured me that the surgery was 16 going to happen. I have wanted top surgery since I was 12. I have been on the waitlist for top 17 surgery for over two years, since I was 14. I have been preparing, and telling my friends, and 18 cancelling plans so that I have time to recover. So, it was extremely upsetting to me when, the 19 night before my surgery, the hospital told me my appointment was cancelled. After I got off the 20 phone with the hospital, I felt scared and panicked.

21 4. I was notified that my surgery was "indefinitely postponed" when the person in 22 charge of insurance for Gender-Affirming Surgery at Seattle Children's Hospital called me and 23 said my surgery would not be happening because the hospital did not want to lose federal funding 24 under the EO. They had also contacted my mom and left a voicemail with her. I was really upset, 25 so my mom called several helplines and finally got ahold of someone in General Surgery who 26 said my surgery was still on the schedule.

1 5. We went to the hospital the morning of my appointment, just in case. We were
 2 informed that my surgery was no longer on the schedule, that it had been taken off overnight.
 3 We had to wait from approximately 5:30am until about 7:00 or 8:00am to speak with someone.
 4 A hospital Director and a nurse came out to inform us that the surgery was postponed because
 5 of the EO, and said the reason was that they couldn't risk the hospital losing federal funding,
 6 which would put many more children at risk. They said it had been a hard decision to make.
 7 They apologized, but they said couldn't give us any information about when surgeries might
 8 resume, where I would be in line when that happened, or if I would have to start the whole
 9 process over.

10 6. Since my surgery was cancelled, everything is uncertain and I have been really
 11 stressed. I don't know if my surgery will be rescheduled, if they do schedule where I'll go on the
 12 waitlist, if my letters of recommendation for gender-affirming care will still be accepted, if I'll
 13 have to clear everything with my insurance again, and maybe have to restart the whole process.
 14 The letters of recommendation took months to get. The idea of having to start this process all
 15 over again is extremely upsetting, because I have been waiting for this for so long. I wanted it
 16 so badly that I kept it secret from everyone but my immediate family and two friends because I
 17 was worried if I told people, then something bad would happen, the surgery would get canceled,
 18 and I'd have to explain to everyone I told why it didn't happen. After being reassured over and
 19 over again that it was definitely happening, I shared with the rest of my friends, only for the
 20 surgery to be canceled like I was scared it would.

21 7. I came out as trans right after I turned 12 years old. My mom tells me that when
 22 I was really little, I would ask her, "when am I going to start turning into a boy?" For my whole
 23 childhood, starting when I was 2 years old, I hated wearing girls' clothes. When I started going
 24 through puberty, I felt so uncomfortable with my hips and my chest and my voice. Since I have
 25 never felt like I fit being a girl, I started experimenting with using different pronouns and a

1 different name. When I was 12, I told my parents that I was trans and they were really supportive.
 2 We have family friends who are trans, so I had grown up around trans people my whole life.

3 8. A few months after I came out, I went with my parents to my first appointment
 4 at the Gender Clinic at Seattle Children's Hospital. The doctor asked me tons of questions about
 5 myself, my physical and mental health, what I like to do, and what my support systems are like.
 6 They asked me about my goals for my transition and how I wanted to look and feel in the future.
 7 They made it clear that if I didn't know yet, or if I changed my mind, they would support me.
 8 They helped me make an appointment to get prescribed puberty blockers and get an IUD to stop
 9 my period. They also made sure I had a therapist who was affirming my gender. Since that first
 10 appointment, I go back and see my doctor every 4-6 months.

11 9. When I was 14, I asked to start the process to be prescribed testosterone. I started
 12 taking testosterone a few months later. Testosterone lowered my voice, redistributed my weight
 13 so I looked more masculine, changed my face shape a little, and I began to grow facial hair. Ever
 14 since then, I have felt more comfortable with my voice, face, and body. Before I went on
 15 testosterone, I had suicidal thoughts and I self-harmed. I was unhappy with the way I looked,
 16 and I felt like I would rather not live than be seen the way people saw me. I feel so much happier
 17 with the way that I present now that I've been taking testosterone and am more confident in
 18 myself, but I still have concerns about being perceived as a girl if people notice my chest.

19 10. I was hoping that once I had top surgery, I'd feel less anxious about how I present.
 20 I really love swimming and being active, and I find a lot of the time I avoid doing activities
 21 where people might see my chest more clearly and perceive me as a girl. I've had people tell me
 22 that the only reason they can tell I'm trans is because of my chest. I have a medical condition
 23 which prevents me from using a chest binder to flatten the look of my chest. I have been holding
 24 onto top surgery as something that will make me feel more like the person I am.

25 11. My mom said that she used to feel like her main job as a parent was making sure
 26 I stayed alive and she didn't lose me to suicide. I was homeschooled up until last year because

1 everything with my gender dysphoria and mental health was so bad. Now she says she barely
 2 sees me because I am always out with my friends, at school, making plans for my future, and
 3 generally “doing cool things.” I am so much happier on testosterone and I know that I’ll feel
 4 even better once I have top surgery.

5 12. I’m so scared about what this EO means for me and other trans youth. I’m worried
 6 I won’t have access to my Hormone Replacement Therapy. I’m scared for my friends who get
 7 gender-affirming care and are on Medicaid. I worry that these executive orders will get more
 8 aggressive and will make it harder for me and other trans kids to exist and stay here. I’m stressed
 9 out about the gender marker on my passport and what will happen if I travel. I’m scared that
 10 there will be more actions from the federal government that target trans people using the
 11 bathroom or dressing in certain ways in public.

12 13. I have a condition called Ehlers Danlos Syndrome, which can affect my healing
 13 from surgery and anesthesia. My surgeon at Children’s Hospital knows all about my condition
 14 and is prepared to treat it properly. If I had to find another plastic surgeon with that knowledge
 15 who does this surgery on adolescents, it would probably mean travelling to another state or
 16 country.

17 14. If I lost access to my testosterone, many of the changes that have helped me to
 18 feel more comfortable would be gone. I would start to look more feminine, my voice might get
 19 higher, and my periods would come back. I honestly don’t know if I could survive like that.
 20 Before I started using testosterone, I had suicidal thoughts and I self-harmed. I don’t have those
 21 thoughts anymore, but I’m not sure what would happen if I couldn’t continue using testosterone.
 22 At the very least, I wouldn’t want to leave my home. I wouldn’t want to see people and be
 23 perceived as a girl.

24 15. I’m not sure I would be alive now if it wasn’t for the gender-affirming care I have
 25 received, like testosterone and puberty blockers. I love my high school and the wilderness
 26 program, but I wouldn’t feel comfortable to do those things anymore if I were forced to

1 detransition. I would have to be homeschooled to completely avoid being misgendered to protect
2 my mental health. I don't know what will happen if I'm unable to have the top surgery I have
3 wanted for over two years.

4 I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington and the
5 United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct.

6 DATED this 5th day of February 2025, at Seattle, Washington.

7 *Elihu Hillinger*
8

ELIHU HILLINGER
Child of Shannon Hillinger, Walker Aumann

9 *shannon hillinger*
10

SHANNON HILLINGER
Parent of Elihu Hillinger

11 *Walker Aumann*
12

WALKER AUMANN
Parent of Elihu Hillinger